The Effects of Gender Identity and Masculinity on Fear of Intimacy

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Abstract

Gender identity, masculinity, and fear of intimacy will be analyzed following a two-way factorial design, and categorical by continuous regression. Participants will be recruited from a private University in Burbank, California and through social media. The data collection of this study will be done through Google Forms. Participants will be completing two scales in this survey: the Masculinity Inventory Scale (Alfonso et al., 2014) and the Fear of Intimacy Scale (Descutner et al., 1991). The major contribution that this study brings is that masculinity is not only being tested on those who identify as male but on females and non-binary individuals as well.

Set Up

❖ The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between an individual's gender identity and level of masculinity on their fear of intimacy.

Research Questions:

- How does gender identity & masculinity effect fear of intimacy in relationships?
- Does the gender identity in which one identifies contribute or correlate an individual's fear of intimacy?
- Does an individual's masculinity affect their levels of fear intimacy?

❖ Research in this topic is of value due to, " the ability to form and maintain intimate relationships has been associated with personal well-being"(Descunter et.al,1991).

Methods

1. <u>Main hypothesis:</u> Participants that identify as male and have higher masculinity will report significantly higher levels of Fear of Intimacy.
2. Participants Gender identity will significantly suggest an individual's level of Fear of Intimacy.
3. Participants with higher masculinity would have significantly higher Fear of Intimacy.

Past studies have been done using similar variables:

❖ " Gender, Ethnicity , & Homelessness" (Gonzalez, 1994)

❖ "On Heterosexuality Masculinity Some Physical Consequences of
   the Social Construction of Gender and Sexuality" (Merek, 1994)

SV: Gender Identity (Female, Male, & Non-Binary)
SV2: Masculinity Inventory Scale (Mincey et al.,2014) → Cronbach a (.939) , Excellent
Scale from 1-6, Low 38 to High 228
DV: Fear of Intimacy Scale (Descunter et al., 1991) → Cronbach a (.866), Good
Scale from 1- 5 , Low 35 to High 175

Participants

❖ Participants were recruited through snowballing, use of social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat), and through email or text.

❖ Survey given to participants was conducted through Google Forms using an approved IRB consent and debriefing form.

# of Participants: 40 total participants, Ranging from ages 18 - 42
→ with a mean of 22.4250 and a standard deviation of 4.06289

- ❑ Latinx 50%
- ❑ African American 7.5%
- ❑ Caucausian 30%
- ❑ Asian American 7.5%
- ❑ Other 5%

- ❑ Male 40%
- ❑ Female 42.5%
- ❑ Non-Binary 17.5%

Scale for Masculinity

Scale for Fear of Intimacy

Table 1

Items for the Masculinity Inventory Scale- Short

Number	Statement
1.	There are certain things a man must go through to become a man
2.	A man takes care of business and does what needs to be done
3.	A man handles his responsibilities
4.	A man provides for his family, children, or other family
5.	A man takes care of everything
6.	A man thinks about how he can influence younger people
7.	A man mentors other people
8.	A man supports himself completely
9.	A man takes care of everything without depending on other people
10.	A man makes sacrifices for his family
11.	A man does things he may not want to get the job done
12.	A man makes things happen for his family
13.	A man takes care of his kids
14.	A man is able to control his emotions
15.	A man does not cry
16.	I have to prove to myself and everybody that my life has purpose
17.	I have to prove myself in academic situations
18.	I have to prove myself in social situations
19.	I have a lot to live up to
20.	Challenges encourage me to go above and beyond
21.	Life situations force you to become a man
22.	My mother showed me how to work hard
23.	My father has instilled in me the characteristics of a man
24.	My aunt(s) showed me how to work hard
25.	When I carry myself like my father or better, I'll be a man
26.	My grandmother showed me how to work hard
27.	My brother(s) showed me how to be a man
28.	My sister(s) informed me how to be a man
29.	My grandfather showed me how to be a man
30.	My mom informed me about how to be a man
31.	My female cousin(s) informed me about how to be a man
32.	My male cousin(s) showed me how to be a man
33.	I admire the way my father carries himself
34.	I taught myself how to become a man
35.	I am the only person responsible for me
36.	Having friends back me up is powerful
37.	It's easier to go through my day when I have someone to talk to
38.	I wasn't prepared to be a man, but I was on own

Note. The Masculinity Inventory Scale used the following scale for each statement: Strongly Agree =1, Agree = 2,

Neutral =3, Disagree = 4, Strongly Disagree = 5, and Not Applicable = 6. None of the items were reverse-coded.

Table 2

Items for the Fear of Intimacy Scale

Number	Statement
1.	I would feel uncomfortable telling 0 about things in the past that I have felt ashamed of.
2.	I would feel uneasy talking with 0 about something that has hurt me deeply.
3.	I would feel comfortable expressing my true feelings to 0. [a]
4.	If 0 were upset I would sometimes be afraid of showing that I care.
5.	I might be afraid to confide my innermost feelings to 0.
6.	I would feel at ease telling 0 that I care about him/her. [a]
7.	I would have a feeling of complete togetherness with 0. [a]
8.	I would be comfortable discussing significant problems with 0. [a]
9.	A part of me would be afraid to make a long-term commitment to 0.
10.	I would feel comfortable telling my experiences, even sad ones, to 0. [a]
11.	I would probably feel nervous showing 0 strong feelings of affection.
12.	I would find it difficult being open with 0 about my personal thoughts.
13.	I would feel uneasy with 0 depending on me for emotional support.
14.	I would not be afraid to share with 0 what I dislike about myself. [a]
15.	I would be afraid to take the risk of being hurt in order to establish a closer relationship with 0.
16.	I would feel comfortable keeping very personal information to myself.
17.	I would not be nervous about being spontaneous with 0. [a]
18.	I would feel comfortable telling 0 things that I do not tell other people. [a]
19.	I would feel comfortable trusting 0 with my deepest thoughts and feelings. [a]
20.	I would sometimes feel uneasy if 0 told me about very personal matters.
21.	I would be comfortable revealing to 0 what I feel are my shortcomings and handicaps. [a]
22.	I would be comfortable with having a close emotional tie between us. [a]
23.	I would be afraid of sharing my private thoughts with 0.
24.	I would be afraid that I might not always feel close to 0.
25.	I would be comfortable telling 0 what my needs are. [a]
26.	I would be afraid that 0 would be more invested in the relationship than I would be.
27.	I would feel comfortable about having open and honest communication with 0. [a]
28.	I would sometimes feel uncomfortable listening to 0's personal problems.
29.	I would feel at ease to completely be myself around 0. [a]
30.	I would feel relaxed being together and talking about our personal goals. [a]
31.	I have shied away from opportunities to be close to someone.
32.	I have held back my feelings in previous relationships.
33.	There are people who think that I am afraid to get close to them.
34.	There are people who think that I am not an easy person to get to know.
35.	I have done things in previous relationships to keep me from developing closeness.

Note. The Fear of Intimacy Scale used the following scale for each statement: Not at all characteristics of me =1,

slightly characteristic of me = 2, moderately characteristics of me = 3, very characteristics of me = 4, and extremely

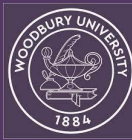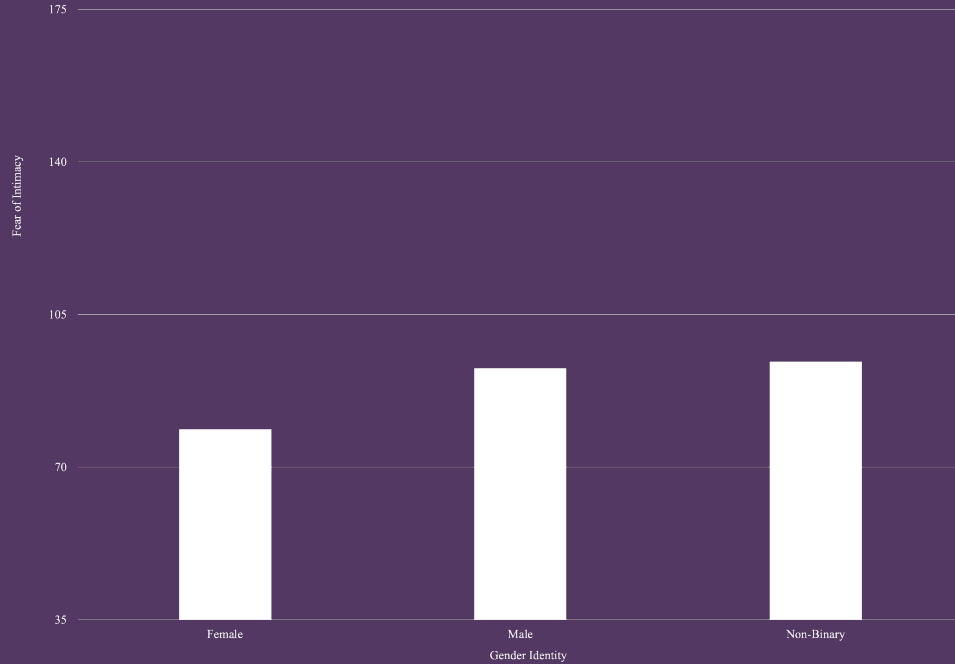characteristics of me = 5. Reverse-coded item are labeled with superscript.

Figure 1

Figure 2

Results & Main Analysis

Dummy A: M=1, F=0, & NB=0
Dummy B; F=1, M=0, NB=0

Model 1 summary of DV
$R^2 = .064$, $F(1, 38) = 2.61$, $p = .114$.
Masculinity, b = -0.15, $t(38) = -1.62$, $p = .114$.

Model 2 summary of DV
$\Delta R^2 = .116$, $F(2, 36) = 2.55$, $p = .092$.
$Dummy_A$, b = -5.43, $t(36) = -0.62$, $p = .540$.
$Dummy_B$, b = -16.44, $t(36) = -2.01$, $p = .052$.

Model 3 summary of DV
$\Delta R^2 = .008$, $F(2, 34) = 0.17$, $p = .848$.
$Interaction_A$, b = -0.04, $t(34) = -0.13$, $p = .900$.
$Interaction_B$, b = 0.11, $t(34) = 0.35$, $p = .732$.

Data Checking

❖ <u>Missing Data:</u> The original participant total was 55 participants, yet 14 did not fully complete the survey & 1 didn't consent to being in the data (all of these individuals were removed and not in the final data).

❖ **No outliers** because all the data (z-scores) were **non-outliers**, meaning it was between -3.29 to +3.29.

❖ For the Masculinity Inventory Scale (MIS) female, male, & non-binary individuals data resulted in having a symmetrical skewness & being non-kurtotic.

❖ As for the Fear of Intimacy Scale female, male, & non-binary participants data resulted in having a symmetrical skweness & being non-kurotic.

❖ Both found because the ratios calculated from statistic & standardized error are between -3.2 & +3.2

Discussion

❖ In my study, I had originally hypothesized that there would be significantly higher levels of Fear of Intimacy for participants that identified as male. Yet, the non-binary population had higher Fear of Intimacy (though they did have a smaller population).

❖ Additionally, the data did interestingly show that in Dummy B females had a significantly lower fear of intimacy compared to males and non-binary participants.

❖ The major novelty that this study brings in comparison to past literature like the study, "Recollected Parental Care & Fear of Intimacy in Emerging Adults" (Buckley et al., 2013), finding that males have significantly higher Fear of Intimacy than females, yet this study the non-binary population is included in the participants of the data sample.

Limitations

❏ Small sample size
❏ Minimal Diversity in Population
❏ Short research & data collection period

Future Studies

❖ Future studies can improve by gaining a larger more diverse sample size and with so being able to possibly find a larger more significant effect. (especially in interest to the non-binary population)

Implications From Study

❖ Implications that can be drawn from this study are that the characteristic of masculinity isn't a bad thing in intimacy since this study found a correlation between high masculinity in participants with lower levels of Fear of Intimacy.